

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend Claims 2-12 as indicated.

Please cancel Claim 1 as indicated.

1. CANCELLED

2. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim + 11, wherein the selected cardiac nerves include nerves associated with a posterior surface of the left atrium of the heart.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim + 11, wherein the selected cardiac nerves include sympathetic nerves proximate the Ligament of Marshall.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim + 11, wherein the step of cooling has a duration of 15 to 120 seconds.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim + 11, wherein the step of cooling is accomplished at a temperature of approximately -80 degrees Celsius.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim + 11, wherein the selected cardiac nerves are approached endocardially.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim + 11, wherein the selected cardiac nerves are approached epicardially.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim + 11, wherein the selected cardiac nerves are stunned so that nerve signal conduction is temporarily inhibited.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim + 11, wherein the selected cardiac nerves are ablated so that nerve signal conduction is permanently inhibited.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim + 11, further comprising the step of cold mapping cardiac tissue prior to the step of cooling.

11. (Currently Amended) A method of treating an arrhythmia of the heart comprising the step of preventing postoperative transient arrhythmia, comprising the steps of:
performing a surgical procedure on a heart; and
postoperatively cooling selected cardiac nerves to a temperature below -30 degrees Celsius until nerve signal conduction in the selected cardiac nerves is at least temporarily inhibited.

12. (Original) A method of treating an arrhythmia of the heart preventing postoperative transient arrhythmia, comprising the steps of:
- performing a surgical procedure on a heart;
epicardially approaching a selected region of the heart using with a cooling device
postoperatively;
placing the cooling device on the surface portion of the heart; and
using the cooling device to cool selected cardiac nerves to a temperature below -
30 degrees Celsius.